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ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ	HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY
ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ	FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOLOGY

UNIVERSITY OF CRETE

December 2011

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External Evaluation Committee

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department of Philology of the University of Crete consisted of the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQAA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 :

1. Professor David HOLTON (President)
Professor of Modern Greek, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom
2. Dr Alexis DIMITRIADIS
Senior Researcher, Utrecht Institute of Linguistics OTS,
Utrecht University, The Netherlands
3. Dr Timothy E. DUFF
Reader in Classics, University of Reading, United Kingdom
4. Professor Paola Maria MINUCCI
Associate Professor, University of Rome "La Sapienza", Italy

Introduction

The Department of Philology of the University of Crete is part of the Faculty of Philosophy, and comprises four divisions: Classical Studies, Byzantine and Modern Greek Philology, Linguistics, and Theatre Studies & Musicology. The first two are approximately equal in size and significantly larger than the other two, in terms of numbers of both teaching staff and students. Attached to the Department are four laboratories (εργαστήρια), each with a director, who is a member of the teaching staff.

I. The External Evaluation Procedure

The external evaluation process took place during the week of 11-17 December 2011. The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) met in Athens for a brief orientation at the HQAA offices, then travelled to Crete for two days on site at the Department of Philology. On the first evening the EEC had an informal meeting with the Vice-Rector for Quality Assurance and the Head of Department, together with several other members of the teaching staff. During the next two days the EEC held a series of meetings with: each of the four divisions, at which most of the permanent and contracted members of the teaching staff were present; support staff; and undergraduate and postgraduate students (21 and 13 respectively). They visited the library, the teaching rooms, and the four special laboratories, and inspected a representative selection of dissertations, student questionnaires (which give their assessment of individual modules), and both examination question papers and scripts.

The members of the department were exceptionally cooperative and reacted very promptly to requests for additional documents or other information, despite the short notice given to the Department of the dates of the evaluation visit, which unfortunately coincided with a busy schedule of events. The EEC was impressed by the congenial and collegiate atmosphere which prevails in the Department and by the friendly relations between staff and students.

II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

The Internal Evaluation Report provided comprehensive information about all aspects of the Department's work and proved to be extremely useful. (For future reference: it would be helpful to explain abbreviations and acronyms or include a glossary.) The report was clearly the result of long and painstaking work on the part of the committee, in which relatively junior staff were heavily involved. The EEC would particularly like to thank the committee members for facilitating their task.

The EEC also made use of the Department's well constructed and user-friendly website. Some omissions were noted in the information initially provided to the Committee, but all requests for further

details were quickly fulfilled. Although the data in the report related to the academic year 2009-10, the Committee was able to obtain updated information where necessary. The EEC can therefore confirm that the objectives of the internal evaluation process were fully met by the Department.

A. Curriculum

To be filled separately for each undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programme.

APPROACH

Undergraduate

The goals of the undergraduate programme are 1) to provide students with a broad education in Greek, and to a lesser extent, Latin, "philology" (i.e. language, literature, linguistics), and thus to allow them to work as teachers of philology in secondary education, and 2) to offer the possibility of more specialised knowledge of one of the four main areas of philology taught in the Department: i. Classical Studies, ii. Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, iii. Linguistics, and iv. Theatre Studies and Musicology. These objectives take into account current expectations in Greece that holders of a degree in Philology should be equipped to teach both Ancient and Modern Greek at high school level, while also aiming to prepare students for higher degrees in one of the branches of philology. The current programme was put into effect in 1988-9 and revised in 2004-5.

The curriculum aims to achieve these goals through offering a) a series of compulsory, introductory modules taught both within the department itself (28 modules, including a number of language modules in Ancient Greek, Latin and Byzantine Greek) and in other departments of the Faculty of Philosophy (History and Archaeology, Philosophy and Education) (5 modules), and b) a series of optional modules in each of the four areas of philology, including a number of seminar modules (students take 4 of the latter).

The broad outlines of the curriculum are decided by the department through its General Assembly (Γενική Συνέλευση). Each of the four divisions of the Department makes decisions about its own precise course offerings.

Postgraduate

There is a single postgraduate taught programme (MA) in philology, which offers specialisation in one of the following areas: Classical philology; Byzantine philology; Modern Greek philology; linguistics; and the history and theory of theatre and cinema. The goals of the postgraduate taught programme are to promote the specialist study of the four main areas of philology taught by the Department and to produce graduates able to continue in research at higher levels. It aims to achieve these goals through offering a number of postgraduate modules (roughly 12 per year, of which students take 6 in their first 3 semesters), plus individual supervision on a dissertation. The programme began operation in 1993-4, and the curriculum was last revised in 2007-8.

The taught postgraduate programme is coordinated by the Postgraduate Board of Studies, under the leadership of a Programme Director. Admission to the postgraduate programme is on the basis of written examinations and interviews; a basic requirement is a degree with a mark of Excellent or Very Good.

There is also a doctoral programme, for which there are no taught courses.

IMPLEMENTATION

Undergraduate

The curriculum appears to work extremely well both in providing a broad philological education and in allowing the possibility of specialisation, from the third semester onwards, in one of the four subjects ("directions") offered. It is less clear that it works well in providing a training in pedagogy, given that it involves only one module in this subject and (as of 2010) no practical classroom experience. However, students have the option of attending a number of relevant lectures outside the Department, in fulfilment of the Ministry's requirements..

A distinctive feature of the curriculum is that the programme allows a degree of student choice through the selection of optional modules, a feature which corresponds to practice in many programmes abroad. Another distinctive feature is the presence of classes in theatre and film, taught in the division of Theatre Studies and Musicology, which provides one compulsory module and a number of options.

The structure of the curriculum is clearly articulated and communicated to students in an excellent and informative Guide to Undergraduate Studies, which is available in electronic form. Two members of staff also act as Academic Advisors; the students with whom the EEC met expressed great satisfaction with the guidance offered to them by the latter, and in general commented most favourably on the availability of teaching staff to answer whatever questions they might have.

The number of contact hours allotted to each module (3 hours per week over 13 weeks = 39) is sufficient; in fact, the EEC thought that consideration might be given to reducing the number of contact hour per module and the number of modules taken (see below).

Teaching staff are very qualified to deliver the programme. All are accomplished scholars, many with an impressive international reputation.

Postgraduate

The taught postgraduate curriculum seems to work extremely well. Like the undergraduate programme, it is distinctive in giving students a large degree of choice in their selection of modules. The students with whom the EEC met were enthusiastic in their praise of their programme and their teachers. The only slight regret expressed was that students who attended specialist undergraduate modules did so without receiving credit.

The new teaching rooms of the Faculty of Philosophy provide the Department with modern facilities and plenty of space for teaching; the offices of the staff are adequate, and the university library is equipped with up-to-date technology, has wide holdings of books and periodicals, and access to online resources. It also has long opening hours and allows students to borrow books.

RESULTS

The undergraduate curriculum achieves its goals of giving students a grounding in philology very well, and in preparing those who will become high school teachers with the necessary subject-specific knowledge.

The Department is rightly proud of the level of choice allowed by the undergraduate programme and of the 4 seminar modules, which encourage student participation and are examined by the submission of an essay (rather than the sitting of an exam). The students with whom the EEC spoke were also most appreciative of both these aspects.

The Department is aware of several problems that may reduce the effective delivery of the undergraduate curriculum: 1. There is a shortage of teaching staff to cover the syllabus. This is particularly apparent in the large introductory modules. 2. Many students are passive rather than active in their approach to learning. 3. Many students are unprepared for their studies by their high school training. 4. Many students have a weak grounding in history and do not choose to take optional modules offered by the Department of History and Archaeology. 5. There are many more students enrolled on each module than actually attend class, and many students repeatedly attempt and fail exams in the same module. This results in a current active enrolment of c. 1,050 students, despite an annual entry of c. 200. (The total number appears to have fallen in the last few years.) 6. Only a very small proportion of students finish their degree within 4 years.

IMPROVEMENT

The EEC agrees with the Department that these are indeed problems. The introduction of a limit to the number of years of undergraduate registration should go some way towards solving the last two problems (5 and 6). The EEC believes that more thought might

helpfully be given to how to solve the first four problems (1-4).

The Department feels that a reversal of the recent reduction of teaching staff and of the freeze in new appointments would address the first problem, and has no particular solutions for problems 2-4. The EEC agrees that an increase in teaching staff is desirable; if this is not possible through the appointment of full-time staff, then greater resources ought to be made available for the employment of graduate students to act as teaching assistants, a common practice in many university systems abroad.

The EEC feels in addition that thought ought to be given to revising the undergraduate programme of studies to address problems 1-4 directly. In particular, the EEC recommends that consideration be given to whether both the number of modules required to pass the degree (currently 55) and the number of contact hours taught per module (39) might both be reduced. The present situation results in a very heavy burden on the teaching staff, much heavier than in comparable departments in UK or the USA. Furthermore, the high number of classroom hours which each student has per week (c. 24 hours per week if the degree is completed over 4 years) may be a contributing factor to the rather passive approach which the Department detects in many students' attitude to learning. A lower number of contact hours and a greater emphasis on students' own study might be pedagogically beneficial in assisting students to be autonomous learners, an important transferable skill both for those who proceed to postgraduate study and those who pursue other careers. A reduction in the number of modules and in contact hours per module might also allow for an increase in the relative proportion of modules taught by seminars, and by the introduction, in modules at present taught only through lectures, of a few smaller-group classes alongside the lectures. A greater emphasis on small group classes would also improve the acquisition of transferable skills in oral presentation, debate and team-work.

The EEC suggests that the third problem - the fact that undergraduate students arrive unprepared - might be addressed by placing more emphasis on introductory modules, which take into account the prior knowledge of most students who enter the Department, and by building a clearer element of progression into the programme. At the moment, the programme allows students to take many modules in any order. The EEC felt that a more considered framework, by which students progress from introductory modules, through more specialised to advanced modules, would result in better student learning and solve some of the problems presented by students' lack of prior knowledge of the subject. Such a change is not incompatible with the maintenance of a large element of student choice in the selection of optional modules.

Problem 4 (limited knowledge of history) might be addressed by greater collaboration with the Department of History and Archaeology in the design and delivery of the curriculum. Thought might, for example, be given to whether collaborative modules might be offered,

aimed at students of the two departments and involving teaching staff of both. Consideration might also be given to collaboration between the divisions of the Department of Philology in offering, e.g. a module in the ancient theatre taught by staff in both Classical Philology and Theatre Studies and Musicology.

At postgraduate level, consideration might be given to whether some specialist undergraduate modules (e.g. Papyrology) might be co-listed as taught postgraduate (MA) modules, albeit with a different method of assessment.

As mentioned elsewhere in this report (Section D), the EEC notes that the Department's committee structure does not seem entirely appropriate for timely revision of the undergraduate curriculum. All issues relating to the curriculum are dealt with by the Department's General Assembly and the meetings of the individual divisions. There is thus no clear mechanism by which the programme of studies is reviewed or suggestions for changes elicited or discussed. A nimbler structure, in which responsibility for the curriculum is delegated to a board of studies, chaired by a senior member of the teaching staff (as is done for the postgraduate taught programme), might be beneficial. This would enable the Department to monitor the effectiveness of the undergraduate curriculum more continuously, and to introduce incremental changes as necessary.

B. Teaching

APPROACH

Undergraduate modules are delivered in one of three ways: as lecture modules (including large, introductory modules), as “exercises” (ασκήσεις: generally language classes, but also, e.g., papyrology) and as “seminars” (advanced modules with compulsory attendance and an enrolment limit of 25). Lecture modules and exercises are assessed by written examination, which a student can sit at any examination period after enrolment (there are 2 examination periods for each course per year, but altogether three examination periods: January, June and – for resits – September). Seminars are assessed through a final essay, and sometimes through other assessed work carried out during the semester.

Undergraduate students are free to enrol for almost any combination of modules in a given term; the goal is to give students the freedom and the responsibility to manage their own personal programme of studies. The term-by-term programme which appears in the Guide to Undergraduate Studies is a suggestion only; for the seminar modules there are certain prerequisites, which are almost always enforced.

Postgraduate modules are taught by seminars only.

IMPLEMENTATION

Teaching is facilitated by the availability of the excellent university library (see also section D, Facilities), and the university’s Content Management System, ClassWeb (classweb.cc.uoc.gr), which supports communication between students and the teaching staff, and allows students to download handouts and other materials distributed in class.

The four research laboratories also enrich teaching. Collectively, they serve as repositories of primary materials (recordings, digitized collections of rare texts), but also provide opportunities for hands-on training as well as original research.

Student feedback is elicited by the distribution of questionnaires for each module towards the end of each semester. The Department expressed some dissatisfaction with the level of student participation in filling in the questionnaires, one cause of which was a distrust of the concept of “evaluation” by some members of the student body.

The Department participates in the Erasmus programme, which allows students to study in universities outside Greece and to transfer their marks and credits so earned to their degree at the University of Crete. Teaching staff are able to teach at European universities

under the provisions of the Erasmus programme, and vice versa. According to the data provided by the Internal Evaluation, the Department had links with 22 departments in other European universities during the 2009-10 academic year. Two students and four members of the teaching staff visited other Universities under the programme that year (10 students and 2 members of teaching staff in 2008-9), while 7 students and 6 members of staff came to the Department from universities abroad.

RESULTS

There is no doubt that both undergraduate and graduate teaching in the Department of Philology at Crete is excellent. The undergraduate students whom the EEC met uniformly praised the teaching staff for their approachability and responsiveness to student requests for help. They were also very appreciative of the freedom of choice which the programme of studies gives them, and of the help offered in choosing modules by the Academic Advisors. They also valued highly the four seminar modules which they took, as these gave them more of a sense of responsibility and engagement with the subject and more immediate contact with the teaching staff.

IMPROVEMENT

As mentioned elsewhere in this document (A: Curriculum), a reduction in teaching hours might be helpful in reducing the heavy burden currently shouldered by teaching staff, and in allowing the addition of some seminar-style classes to modules currently taught by lectures alone. A change along these lines would have the additional benefit of assisting students to be active learners.

The EEC felt that the Department were not at present very consistent in how they used student questionnaires and what status they gave them. Consideration might be given to this, and also to whether asking some more "open" questions might be more effective in eliciting the kind of responses which might help teaching staff to improve their own modules. Some (but not all) members of the EEC thought that questionnaires might be completed and analysed online.

The EEC has a few minor suggestions to make in the realm of teaching and assessment. Written examinations might benefit from the introduction of more questions aimed at eliciting discursive answers, and which might encourage students to reflect on the material rather than merely memorise. A word-limit might helpfully be imposed on both undergraduate and postgraduate assessed essays; this would have the benefit of reducing staff-time spent marking and of increasing the quality of work, while assisting students to learn to express themselves concisely. Masters students might also be

encouraged to see attendance at departmental research seminars and lectures as a core part of their programme.

C. Research

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

APPROACH

The Department's research programme is largely determined by the research interests and activities of individual members of teaching and research staff (including those on short-term contracts). It aims at international standards of excellence in all the subject areas covered by the Department. There is no internal mechanism for assessing research, except through the procedures for appointment and promotion, which are the responsibility of electoral bodies.

IMPLEMENTATION

With the exception of some European programmes, direct funding for research and even for attendance at conferences is extremely limited. Despite all the difficulties and obstacles, members of the Department are actively involved in a wide range of research activities, conferences, seminars and special events. Indeed the Department has a distinguished record of organizing and promoting such events, and of editing and publishing their proceedings. The Department's research environment also benefits from the visits of numerous invited speakers, of international distinction; their lectures are attended by academic staff and students of the Department, as well as by members of the wider University community. Special mention should be made of the four "laboratories" which make a significant, and in some cases outstanding, contribution to the research profile of the Department. The Papyrology and Epigraphy Laboratory has an ongoing excavation and research programme in Egypt, and is creating an archive of inscriptions from the prefecture of Rethymni; it also provides training in research techniques for students, which in some cases has resulted in scholarly publications by undergraduates. The Palaeography Laboratory aims, when funding permits, to continue the work of creating a digital archive of manuscripts, from its expanding collection of microfilms and photographs; it too offers teaching in research skills at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The Linguistics Laboratory is focused on research on the teaching of Modern Greek both as a foreign language and as second (heritage) language to those of Greek descent. It conducts lessons in Modern Greek for Erasmus and other students, gives training seminars for teachers, and functions as an incubator for pedagogical methodology and learning materials. It has produced an impressive number of textbooks, several of which have been adopted by international outreach programmes of the Greek State. It is in active collaboration with other University departments and has also worked with local schools. The Theatre and Music Laboratory holds an

extensive collection of films, in the process of being digitized, which supports the teaching and research needs of the relevant division.

The University Library is a major resource, probably the best such library in Greece, and comparable with those of other leading universities in Europe and North America.

RESULTS

The Department has achieved a high level of success in the implementation of its research objectives. This is confirmed by the steady and truly impressive output of publications, in both monograph and article form, as well as works of reference, editions of texts, and volumes of conference proceedings. Recognition is also apparent in book reviews, citations in the work of other scholars, and the award of prizes by learned societies (e.g. the Academy of Athens).

There are several notable examples of research collaborations with other universities, such as Milan, Cairo (French Archaeological Institute), Michigan and Stuttgart, to name but a few.

Special mention should be made of the digital library project *Ανέμη*, which is an invaluable and much-used research tool. A number of funding applications for other research projects are pending.

The quality of the Department's research work is also confirmed by invitations to give lectures or seminars elsewhere in Greece and internationally, at institutions such as the Institute of Classical Studies (London), University of Amsterdam, MIT, École Normale Supérieure (Paris) etc. and to take up visiting professorships.

The Department is strongly represented in the Faculty of Philosophy's journal *Αριάδνη*, which has achieved an international reputation.

Several young scholars with PhDs from the University of Crete have been appointed to university posts in Greece and elsewhere.

IMPROVEMENT

No specific improvement has been discussed, nor is it necessary to make any such recommendation. The Department is aware that a certain priority should be given to publishing in peer-reviewed journals, but there are also good reasons for continuing to publish in other journals, in Greece and elsewhere, which may address a different audience.

The Department is alive to international trends in scholarship, with notable contributions to areas such as the history and culture of Venetian-ruled Crete and the Minimalist program in linguistics. It has responded successfully to the challenge of new research directions, e.g. in film studies and the reception of antiquity.

The Department has had some success in attracting research funding

but could perhaps be more active in seeking other possible sources of support for its research programmes.

The Department would welcome the following improvements in its research infrastructure:

- the creation of postdoctoral research positions;
- restoration of funding for the Library, which has recently cancelled subscriptions to journals and delayed purchasing books in response to cuts in its budget in the last few years;
- funding for research travel and attendance at conferences, so that colleagues are not obliged to cover their own expenses.

The EEC endorses these aims and concludes that, notwithstanding the existing budgetary and manpower constraints, the Department has succeeded in maintaining a diverse research profile which comprises very many areas of international distinction.

D. All Other Services

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

APPROACH

This section addresses the administrative structure and procedures for decision making of the department, as well as "services" in the narrow sense.

Summary

The Department enjoys a generally excellent university infrastructure, with some weaknesses in the provision of some University-wide services. The Department functions well, but there is scope for streamlining in certain respects.

IMPLEMENTATION

University infrastructure and student services

The University has a centralised electronic registration system for students, which manages all aspects of their records. It is supplemented by physical files only for legally required documents. Each module instructor submits grades directly into the system. The system by all accounts works very well.

Some central university services work less well. In particular the photocopying centre was widely reported as chronically underperforming, necessitating alternative arrangements at the cost of much staff effort.

Facilities

In 1998 the university moved to its new campus on the outskirts of Rethymno. Campus and buildings are of good quality, generally well maintained, and more are being constructed to meet remaining needs. The campus and its beautiful location are among the strengths of the University.

The classrooms and offices are of very good quality and are generally well maintained, though many are not accessible to persons with mobility restrictions. The student cafeteria is pleasant and the food more than satisfactory.

The quality of the campus, and in particular of the library, have the effect that many students spend much of their day on campus. The grounds are large and buildings are spread out, but the campus was still well-populated by students during the EEC visit.

The library is an outstanding facility with a good book collection

(especially in view of the relatively young age of the University), an outstanding collection of archival material and digital resources, and a clearly active leadership that continues to improve its offerings. It also serves as a work and study environment for the students. It has fairly long opening hours (it closes at 8pm), though the teaching staff wish that they could be even longer. The library is well utilised by instructors for the provision of reading materials, and has effective procedures (e.g. "course shelves") to support this function.

The EEC were most impressed with **the website** both of the Department and of the University generally. It was exceptionally clear and informative, and the fact that it was available in English as well as Greek is testimony to the international outlook of both department and university. The online e-learning site, ClassWeb, is also an exceptionally useful tool, which allows students to download material for each module.

The four **special laboratories** of the Department, in addition to their research functions, also ably support various departmental needs (see section C). They are either housed or scheduled to be housed in good quality spaces. The Palaeography Laboratory, which is equipped with microfilm readers and scanners for the production of digital archive materials, cooperates with the library for periodic back-ups and data redundancy.

Organization of the department

The main decision-making organ of the Department is the General Assembly, which consists of the teaching staff and meets at least once a month. (The Administrative Council, which is another official organ of the Department, does not take an active role in its operation.)

Individual leadership is vested in the Department chair and the chairs of the four Divisions. There are a number of permanent and ad hoc committees tasked with specific duties, and a few tasks which are assigned to individuals.

The teaching staff is supported by a department secretary and two technical staff members (ΕΤΕΠ), both of whom also perform administrative/secretarial duties: one responsible for undergraduates, and one for postgraduate and technical infrastructure support. The division of tasks among the three is informal, since the latter two are classed as technical support staff.

The responsibilities of the administrative staff include the following major areas: internal secretarial support, including communication with internal and external bodies, minutes of meetings, legal compliance etc.; course planning (scheduling of modules and exams); support for student needs (enrollment, guidance, graduation procedures); financial administration; and technical

support for equipment and internet resources. In addition, it was reported that some weaknesses in university-provided services (especially the photocopying system) have at present to be compensated for by considerable investment in staff time. Student registration is handled electronically in the university's centralised system, and (as already mentioned) grades are directly entered into the system by each module instructor. Other tasks, and in particular module and exam scheduling, are handled essentially by hand (with the use only of word processing software). Tasks not carried out by the teaching staff are ably met by the clearly dedicated support staff, but it must be noted that the general consensus at the Department is that they are understaffed and would greatly benefit from one more support staff member. However, a considerable portion of staff effort is devoted to tasks that might be more efficiently provided at the level of University-wide services.

Although the staff carry out complicated tasks with a great degree of responsibility, they receive no specialised training in their execution, but must learn on the job. Some have expressed a desire for training, particularly when assigned new responsibilities, and the EEC concurs.

RESULTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

The EEC felt that the Department's staff, both academic and administrative, maintain the good operation of the department at the cost of considerable personal effort. In view of the difficult conditions and the prospects for continuing scarcity of resources, the Department could ease their workload by implementing certain efficiencies in its services and decision making. The EEC feels that there is room for a clearer separation between policy making and its implementation. The former is properly the responsibility of the General Assembly, but the latter could be delegated to individuals who periodically report to the General Assembly. There are currently two individual members of teaching staff who serve as "Academic Advisors" to students, there is a Postgraduate Programme Director, and another member of staff is responsible for the Erasmus programme. This efficient system, which by all accounts works well, could be extended to other areas; for example, with the appointment of a Programme Director for Undergraduate Studies who would be responsible for the day-to-day management of this domain and periodically report to the General Assembly. The Academic Advisors themselves could be empowered to address certain student requests that are in principle the responsibility of the General Assembly (or of the Divisions). The Department can doubtless identify other domains where authority can be efficiently delegated to an individual. For other tasks, the current system of small committees may be more appropriate.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

Members of the Department are actively involved in the cultural life of Rethymno, the island of Crete, and Greece more generally. This is reflected in publications in magazines with a general readership, and in lectures and publications whose intended audience is not limited to the academic community. An example is the annual lecture in memory of Nikos Panayotakis, given by a prominent scholar invited by the Department.

The Linguistics Laboratory, which develops learning materials for teachers of Greek as a foreign or second language, has an active program that offers training for teachers at all levels of education, from kindergarten to secondary education and beyond. In the past it has also facilitated practical training of the Department's students by placing them in local classrooms. In all these ways it serves an important social need linked to growing number of residents in Greece whose home language is not Greek.

E. Strategic Planning, Perspectives for Improvement and Dealing with Potential Inhibiting Factors

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

This is a time of considerable uncertainty for all Greek universities (as it is for all of Greece), not only because of the difficult economic conditions but also because the university system is in the midst of far-reaching transition dictated by law 4009/2011, whose exact implementation and consequences remain unknown. Unavoidably, the Department is focused on keeping things going and on the uncertainties of the transition, rather than on a long-term strategic vision for the direction of the Department. (It should be noted, for example, that as of mid-December 2011, the Department still does not know how many contract staff they can employ for the semester that starts in February.)

Despite the difficulties, the EEC feels that the Department should not postpone its planning process until a clearer scenario emerges. It ought to have in place a plan which will enable it to carry out its mission with significantly reduced resources. This particularly concerns the undergraduate teaching programme, as discussed above, but the postgraduate programme and research facilities ought also to be kept under review. A major responsibility must fall on the University itself, since the strategic plan of one Department cannot be isolated from the overall strategy of the institution in response to the challenges which it faces. *A fortiori*, the Department's short-term planning would be enabled if budget commitments were announced as far in advance as possible.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

The Department of Philology fulfils its educational and research role with great distinction, meeting international standards of excellence in almost all aspects of its activities and engaging fully with the international academic community. It enjoys an excellent reputation within and outside Greece. These are the conclusions reached by the EEC after carrying out the required external evaluation procedure.

The recommendations which follow must be seen in this very positive context.

The EEC makes the following suggestions, which are described in more detail in the preceding sections of this document:

1. That both the University and the Department develop a strategic plan in order to meet the challenges presented by current and future circumstances.
2. That the Department institutes a review of its undergraduate curriculum, and continues this on a regular basis. In particular, the EEC recommends that consideration be given to a reduction in modules and/or teaching hours, and to implementing a clearer system of student progression.
3. That the Department institutes a review of its decision-making procedures and structures.
4. That the University assists the Department by providing its central services more efficiently.

The Members of the Committee

UNIVERSITY OF CRETE
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOLOGY

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